

Halo: Sacrifices
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Summary: The Covenant have found the Sol System. They are advancing towards Earth, attacking any humans on any planet standing in their way. They land on Mars, the last stand for UNSC Army soldiers and ODSTs to buy Earth some time.

1. Chapter 1

Halo: Sacrifice

**Plot: **The Covenant have found the Sol System. They are advancing towards Earth, attacking any humans on any planet standing in their way. They land on Mars, the last stand for UNSC Army soldiers and ODSTs to buy Earth some time. All bets are off, all past reputations are wiped clean. It's now or never.

**A/N: **This is my first fanfic in a long time and I'm glad to be telling this story. I put a lot of work into developing the characters, the battles, and making sure it could fit into the Halo canon. I hope you enjoy the story and feel the emotion that I strived to put into this!

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><p>0500 Hours, 16 October 2552 (Military Calendar)
>UNSC Encampment, 50 Kilometers from Chiron
>Mare Erythraeum, Planet Mars
>Sol System

"Do you ever stop and think if the Covenant will kill us all?"

"I'll be honest with you Gordon, I take it day by day. Since you're asking me today, I'll say it won't happen. But if you ask me another day, I may have changed my mind."

Corporal Ben Gordon gazed at Sergeant Milo Riley as he answered his peculiar question. They were both in a bunk house, with three other soldiers. They were all apart of the same team, Echo Team, a crucial part of the 17th Shock Troop Battalion. They all had their history, before and after the Covenant entered their lives.

"You think they'll find Earth?" Gordon asked.

Riley laid back onto his bunk and said, "We might never know. We can only hope, that's how I see it. You gotta make the best out of the good situations, because they are way too damn few and far between."

"Hoorah."

Gordon and Riley turned around to see Roman Cooper, a Lance Corporal and the rookie of the squad, rise up for the conversation.

"I'll be writing that one down Cooper, that must be the seventh time I've heard you speak since you got on this damn planet!" Riley proclaimed with a laugh.

Roman Cooper, though a skilled sharpshooter, was a rookie to the squad and the war. He had never been in an major engagements with the Covenant, but that doesn't mean he didn't know what they're capable of. He was silent more often than not, constantly living his team role and saving his breath for when it counted.

"We got quite the team now Riley, do you ever think of that?" Gordon asked.

"I do. I've been apart of this team for I don't know how long, but this is the best combination of men we've had so far. We know our roles and we live up to them. Sure we might have some differences or problems to cope with, but in the end we get the job done."

The other two soldiers of Echo Team were catching up on their sleep and missed out on the strong compliments from the Sergeant. They were Corporal Wes Hunter and Staff Sergeant Nathan Whitney. Both had been apart of Echo Team for quite a while, and they both had their own story.

"Call this eight Riley, what's up with Hunter and Whitney? I never heard of their backgrounds." Cooper asked.

"Well Hunter has been in this team for longer than anyone. He was leader at one point too, if you can believe it. But then he got demoted because he would do sick things with the Covenant bodies. Like burning them, shooting them, and even cutting them."

"I still can't believe that's worthy for a demotion, it's the damn Covenant! They kill us and burn our colonies, but we can't serve them up what they deserve in the afterlife?" Gordon replied.

"I agree with you to an extent Gordon. But we shouldn't be wasting all of our ammunition on dead carcasses unless we plan to dig the bullets out. It's a waste of resources and a lack of self-control."

Suddenly the door to the bunk house opened. The three awake soldiers

stood fast and saluted, which woke Hunter and Whitney up. Quickly they rose as well to salute Major Grant Russo.

"At ease men, you know how sore I get about that saluting nonsense."

The five soldiers sat back down on their bunks.

"It's only protocol sir, not much we can do." Riley said.

"Well you wouldn't be doing that protocol if the Covenant were about to glass the ground you stand on, so why do it at all?"

"Don't go telling my men that they shouldn't salute now Russo, not every officer is as open as you." Whitney said, now wide awake.

"Your men? As far as I'm concerned this team is mine, you're just the temporary leader!" Russo chuckled.

The soldiers laughed as well.

Grant Russo was the previous leader of Echo Team and his previous actions as well as his natural military instinct awarded him a promotion to commander of the whole Battalion. Russo saw the same instinct in Whitney as High Command saw in him, and promoted him to Team Leader.

"Now back to business. There have been reports of Covenant forces in the solar system. Nothing confirmed as of yet, but stay on your toes. No one knows if they are here for certain, or if they'll even attack here. Just remember your training and be ready for anything."

"I wouldn't be surprised if it were just a transmission error sir. It would take longer than a month to go from Epsilon Eridani to Sol, wouldn't you think?" Gordon asked.

"We don't know, but in any case be alert. I'm going back to the Command Post to talk with Colonel Ackerson. Perhaps he has some thoughts as well."

The five soldiers moaned as the sound of Ackerson's name. No matter what had occurred with the Covenant, reputations were never wiped clean.

"Enough! He may be an Army Colonel, but we're all apart of the UNSC. We're all human, no matter what. Dismissed." Russo said.

The five soldiers proceeded to wake up completely and prepare for any tasks that may arise that day.

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><p>That's the first chapter, hope you liked it. I'll start working on Chapter 2 tomorrow and get it posted as soon as it's perfect!<p>

2030 Hours, 16 October 2552 (Military Calendar)

>Downtown Chiron
>Mare Erythraeum, Planet Mars
>Sol System

Alonso Lynch unlocked the door to his small, street level apartment. He walked in, closed the door, and immediately threw himself onto his couch.

He yawned and said, "You would think that being a technician at a training facility that is hardly ever used for training wouldn't be that hard!"

After a couple minutes of silence, he sat up and looked around. He realized that there wasn't someone waiting up for him like there once was, and that he was shouting out to nothing.

"Man, I need to get a dog or something. The silence in this apartment is deafening." he said.

Alonso Lynch was a native to Mars, and lived in Chiron his entire life. He was a technician at Chiron Test Station, which housed a course to simulate close quarters combat in Covenant ships. He hadn't seen many go there for training, but the constant one he saw was a SPARTAN supersoldier named Li.

Li had trained at the Chiron Station over the course of a few years. Alonso was the technician who installed the zero gravity for him to train in, which led Li to become the "Zero-G Expert" amongst the SPARTANS. Alonso never spoke a word to him, always in fear that he would just be pestering him. Then he had heard that Li died after being overwhelmed by plasma bolts about two months earlier. Though he didn't know Li personally, Alonso couldn't help but express sorrow for whom he considered to be his friend.

* * *

><p>Sixth Cycle, 8 Units (Covenant Battle Calendar)

>Aboard the Triumphant Declaration
_Entering the Sol System**

Marsus awoke from his slumber as the Triumphant Declaration entered the Sol System, which is said to house the human homeworld. He never strived to be informed as to where he was going, he just slept and fought when he needed to fight. He never spoke against orders, but instead did his best to fulfill them.

The Shipmaster, Lepidus, was the brother of Marsus. Both brothers were similar in their beliefs and morals, but Lepidus fought to make his presence known more than Marsus. He made it his goal to be granted promotions and accept responsibilities, while Marsus didn't. His rank reflected that, being only a Captain.

Marsus arose and proceeded to the Control room of the Battlecruiser, where his brother is more often than not. As he entered the control room, he noticed several Unggoy that saw him and scattered. He sighed at the sight, knowing that he never did anything to deserve the fear that came with his rank. He revered the Unggoy for their bravery,

since he is still alive and most of his soldiers die doing what they know they have to do.

Perhaps he was too caring, as most Jiralhanae aren't. He certainly had a different situation than most of his kind. While his father worshipped his brother for his cunning instincts and stunning brutality, Marsus fell by the wayside. He eventually left his homeworld for High Charity, to become one with the Covenant instead of one with the Jiralhanae. It was here that he met his great friend Arro 'Athin, a Sangheili who would go on to become a Councilor on the High Council.

Lepidus saw his brother and said, "We are entering the system where the human homeworld is, I know it."

Marsus looked at his brother and asked, "How do you know brother?"

"Because I can smell them. I can always smell something delicious." Lepidus said.

Lepidus began to laugh to himself and Marsus tried to appear as though he found it funny. Sure it was his duty to everything he has ever had to find and kill the humans, but they never did anything to him. If he were in control of the Covenant he would have called the war off long ago, and commended the humans for their abilities to survive as well as their instincts. He saw some of his culture in them, and it's why he chose not to feast on his dead enemies.

"We have looked into this scum filled system. We've found two planets that are similar to that of other human colonies. They must be inhabited by them, they house what the humans need to survive." Lepidus said, "We're going to the closest planet first and we should be there within several units, perhaps twenty."

"Aye brother, my troops will be prepared for battle."

"No brother, you will remain on this ship. I'm going to teach you what it takes to be a true Jiralhanae. By the end of this, you'll be prepared for a promotion that I know you deserve."

Marsus sighed, faked a smile and a chuckle, and gave his brother a happy hit to the shoulder. Fighting was his escape from his brother, but perhaps he could be better off away from battle anyway. He tried to focus on the possibility that his brother had just saved him from certain death as he returned to his living quarters.

* * *

><p>Hope you enjoyed the second chapter! Stay tuned for more!</p>

3. Chapter 3

**2230 Hours, 17 October 2552 (Military Calendar)

>**UNSC Encampment, 50 Kilometers from Chiron

>**Mare Erythraeum, Planet Mars

>**Sol System**

Grant Russo returned to the Command Post one last time before calling it a night. He opened the door and found Colonel James Ackerson hard at work on the computer console.

"Colonel, I didn't expect to see you here this late." Russo said.

Ackerson sighed and said, "I'm worried Major. I'm very uneasy."

"What's wrong?"

"Our reports have confirmed that the Covenant are in this system. They were last seen around Jupiter. I don't know if they'll be coming here but I want our men off this rock and into the real fight." Ackerson said.

"Earth."

"Yes. I contacted Command and they say that this planet needs it's own defense almost as much as Earth. I'm assuming that either the Covenant may believe this is Earth or that Command wants to halt possible bloodshed. Either way, it bothers me. Earth is of the utmost importance and we can't help the fight." Ackerson explained.

"Perhaps it's the SPARTAN. Let's be honest Colonel, everyone knows your feelings regarding the SPARTAN-II program. I've seen your Spartans die in battle before. All while he's still alive. I bet you feel as though he's mocking you. Let me tell you something Colonel, in rough times like these you have to forget the past and focus on the greater good. Is our extinction worth your dignity?"

Ackerson kept the stern look on his face, as if he was unaffected by the Major's words. After a few minutes of silence, an alarm sounded. Russo ran over the alarm control.

"Damn, it's the Covenant! They're entering our orbit!"

Russo continued over to the intercom and announced, "Attention all UNSC personnel, the Covenant are entering orbit. Prepare yourselves and await further instructions, this is not a drill!"

James Ackerson awakened from his daze and approached Russo.

"Major, get your men to Chiron to begin evacuations. From the look of things that's where the Covies are headed. I'll get my men to head towards Katagalugan and help the government with their evacuations. Prepare all Pelicans for departure for Luna as soon as everyone is on board!"

"Roger that Colonel, I'll send out Echo Team to lead the pack." Russo said.

Echo Team was up and ready as soon as the alarm sounded. All five team members grabbed their weapons and waited for orders. Russo ran over to their bunk house and slammed the door open.

"Echo Team! I need you to take point for the rest of the Battalion.

Head out to Chiron and assist evac. We need those civilians alive, we can't afford to lose more morale."

"Sir yes sir!" The soldiers shouted.

"You heard him Echo! Get on your feet and let's move out!" Whitney shouted.

The team of five soldiers got into a Pelican with another squad and took off. Other soldiers from the Battalion got into other Pelicans that would be used for evacuations.

* * *

><p>2330 Hours, 17 October 2552 (Military Calendar)

>Outskirts of Chiron
>Mare Erythraeum, Planet Mars
>Sol System

"Pilot, drop us off at the city's entrance and we can clean up the streets! Proceed to the spaceport, we'll send all the civilians that way." Whitney said.

The Pilot nodded and flew towards the spaceport after the Pelican was emptied of the troops.

"Men, split up into your teams and scatter across the city. Luckily for us it isn't that large of a city, but there is still one hundred thousand people that need to be evacuated." Russo said over the Battalion's COMM station, "Echo Team, I want you to go towards City Hall. It is about two klicks north of your position, just continue down the road and you'll see it in the City Square. Evacuate the building and surrounding homes and establish a command post there. Russo out."

"Alright men, we got civies to save and Covies to kill. Let's get on our way!" Whitney shouted.

* * *

><p>That is the last chapter of just buildup and character development. The Battle of Mare Erythraeum begins in the next chapter, coming soon.<p>

End
file.